Thank you for allowing me to submit this comment on behalf of Choice Communications in the matter of Choice Petition for ETC Status in the USVI.

The current POTS line provider, Innovative, is no longer able to handle the customer base that it has. While its staff tries its hardest, it is very clear that the long waits for installations, delayed construction of new facilities for burgeoning areas and the amount of time it takes to implement repairs on ancient lines indicate that we need way more attention that they have to offer.

Also, people feel at a disadvantage when it comes to being dissatisfied with less than stellar service levels. To whom do we complain? The very people who hold the monopoly and know that we have absolutely noplace to go for wired telephone service. Those who can afford it are able to give Innovative the heave-ho in favor of wireless, cellular and satellite phones, but what about the rest of us?

The Virgin Islands are inviting companies to come via the EDC program, adding to our infrastructure to accommodate lots of visitors, and trying to encourage home owners, small businesses and apartment dwellers to enjoy the benefits of state of the art communications.

All the while we live with rusty lines that regularly gain static or drop out completely after a little rain, crossed lines, and long waits for repairs. I'm talking about MINE. If it rained last night, I am guaranteed static this morning. By the time the repair person gets to me, the line has dried out, and "no problems detected" is undoubtedly written on my report. There comes a time when I'd much rather have reliable service than credits every month. The service is what I am paying for, not the down time. Technicians are often over-booked... or the crews are under-staffed, leaving the customer base in the lurch with noplace else to go.

I wish that Innovative could put more time into its facilities than frighening off the competition. Perhaps if there was REAL competition, they would be forced to do so.

Anita Davis
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